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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/57/604/Add.1)*]

57/306. Investigation into sexual exploitation of refugees by aid workers in West Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999,

Recalling also paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 1400 (2002) of 28 March 2002 and paragraph 10 of Council resolution 1460 (2003) of 30 January 2003,

Having considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the investigation into sexual exploitation of refugees by aid workers in West Africa,[1]

Recognizing the important roles and responsibilities that humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel have in protecting and assisting vulnerable populations, especially refugees and internally displaced persons, and expressing appreciation for the valuable efforts of the vast majority of such personnel in this regard,

Expressing its grave concern at incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse against vulnerable populations, in particular refugees and internally displaced persons in West Africa and elsewhere,

Emphasizing that the highest standards of conduct and accountability are required of all personnel serving in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the investigation into sexual exploitation by aid workers in West Africa;[1]

2. *Expresses its serious concern* that the conditions in refugee camps and communities may make refugees, especially women and children, vulnerable to sexual and other forms of exploitation;

3. *Condemns* any exploitation of refugees and internally displaced persons, especially sexual exploitation, and calls for those responsible for such deplorable acts to be brought to justice;

4. *Emphasizes* the need to create an environment free of sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian crises through, inter alia, integrating the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse into the protection and assistance functions of all humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel;

[1] See A/57/465.

5. *Notes with appreciation* the Plan of Action[2] developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises, and encourages all relevant agencies to pursue its effective and appropriate implementation;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the remedial and preventive measures taken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and its implementing partners, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat, in response to recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services are extended, as appropriate, to all peacekeeping missions, refugee camps, refugee-related operations and other humanitarian operations;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that, in response to recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, clear and consistent procedures for impartially reporting and investigating instances of sexual exploitation and related offences are in place in all United Nations peacekeeping missions and humanitarian operations;

8. *Encourages* all United Nations organizations, funds and programmes, and specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations, to incorporate into codes of conduct specific responsibilities of humanitarian aid workers to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual exploitation and abuse and to adopt appropriate disciplinary procedures for dealing with such violations when they occur;

9. *Recognizes* the shared responsibility, within their respective competencies, of United Nations organizations and agencies and troop-contributing countries to ensure that all personnel are held accountable for sexual exploitation and related offences committed while serving in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in response to recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, to maintain data on investigations into sexual exploitation and related offences, irrespective of age and gender, by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel, and all relevant actions taken thereon;

11. *Recalls* its decision that reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services should be considered under the relevant items of the agenda of the General Assembly;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in his implementation of the measures pursuant to the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, to proceed expeditiously also with the implementation of the present resolution, inter alia, by issuing as soon as possible his bulletin on sexual exploitation and abuse, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, including information on any new cases of sexual exploitation revealed and the measures taken to deal with such cases.

83rd plenary meeting
15 April 2003

[2] See A/57/465, annex I.